

THIRD DAY
MONDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER

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GEOGRAPHIC FACTORS OF A NATION'S POWER

1. Introduction.

a. While man can overcome geographic handicaps to a limited degree, the international stature of a nation is inherently influenced by its geography. The geographic factors of special importance are: size, shape, and topography; location and accessibility; climate; soil and other natural resources; and character of boundaries.

b. Recognizing the essential stability of geography, we nevertheless should appreciate that its importance as an element of a nation's strength is subject to change. The insular position of England, for example, does not give the same sense of security to the British in these days of nuclear weapons, aircraft, and missiles that it did during the Napoleonic era. Similarly, many vast regions of the world, once arid and nonproductive, have been converted by modern irrigation methods into rich farming areas. Even climate, which has thus far been subject only to natural forces, may one day fall under the effective control of man's ingenuity.

2. Scope and Purpose of Topic.

To study the importance of natural resources, strategic location, climate, physical features, and environment, and their relation to other elements of a nation's power.

3. Suggested Topics for Class Consideration.

(These questions are posed, not as a guide for the formal lecture, but to stimulate individual study and analysis and for possible use in discussion groups.)

a. From the point of view of geography, how would you compare the power position of the United States and the Soviet Union?

b. To what extent has the long period of geographic isolation of the United States affected our practical assumption of Free World leadership?

c. Will further shortages of United States natural resources, along with continuing population growth, force changes in United States political philosophies?

4. Lecture.

The formal lecture for this day is entitled, "THE INFLUENCE OF GEOGRAPHY ON A NATION'S POWER."

5. Reading.

a. RAW MATERIALS IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS, by Robert Strausz-Hupe and Stefan Possony. A reprint of Chapter 7 from their book, International Relations, New York, 1954, p. 125-154.

b. THEORIES OF WORLD POWER AND CONTROL, by Anthony Reyner. A reprint of Chapter 31 from the book, Global Geography, by E. Willard Miller, George T. Renner and associates, New York, Crowell, 1957, p. 443-451.

c. THE MEANING AND SCOPE OF POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY, by Hans W. Weigert and others. A reprint of part of Chapter 1 from their book, Principles of Political Geography, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1957, p. 12-25.

6. Collateral Reading.

GEOGRAPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF NATIONAL POWER. U. S. Dept. of the Army. Washington, 1951. 99 p. (Pamphlet no. 145-4)

Describes major nations and the power factors that are based upon geographical location.

GEOGRAPHY AND WORLD POLITICS, by Lucile Carlson. Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, 1958. 534 p.

A regional presentation of political geography defining existing conditions and relationships. Cf. Part One, Section B, "The Primary Factors in Political Geography."

GLOBAL GEOGRAPHY, by Eugene Willard Miller and associates. 2d ed. New York, Crowell, 1957. 483 p.

Comprises 32 essays on the physical, cultural, economic, and political aspects of world geographic relations.

INTERNATIONAL RESOURCES AND NATIONAL POLICY, by Olin T. Mouzon. New York, Harper, 1959. 752 p.

A review and discussion of the many interrelated factors bearing on national policy. Cf. Unit Two, Parts I, II and III dealing with natural resources.

PRINCIPLES OF POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY, by Hans W. Weigert and others. New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1957. 723 p.

An analytical text showing the effects of the blending and interrelationships of political and geographic factors on national power.